

77

REPORT OF  
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

OF THE

Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs

AT

MT. STERLING, JUNE 21, 1906

“Public Schools of Kentucky”

By Mrs. Herbert W. Mengel.

“Higher Education in Kentucky”

By Dean Irene T. Meyers.

LOUISVILLE:  
GEO. G. FETTER COMPANY  
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21

# Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs.

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## Officers—1906-1907.

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## Report of Education Committee.



MRS. C. P. BARNES, Chairman.

DEAN IRENE T. MEYERS, Lexington.	MISS MARILLA W. FREEMAN, Louisville.
MRS. GEO. C. AVERY, Louisville.	MRS. HERBERT W. MENGEL, Louisville.
MRS. WM. MYALL, Paris.	MRS. JOHN B. CASTLEMAN, Louisville.

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The work of the committee for the past year was a "Study of the Educational Status of Kentucky" along these lines: "Our Mountain Schools," "The Public Schools of Kentucky," "Higher Education in Kentucky," and "The Trained Librarian a Factor in Education."

Resulting from this study, the Education Committee offered the following resolutions which were adopted by the State Federation:

The Kentucky State Federation of Women's Clubs urges:

1st. The formation of a School Improvement Committee in each club in the State for the purpose of studying the educational conditions and doing some practical work for school betterment.

2d. That the election of school boards be divorced from politics, and that public schools be placed beyond all political control.

3d. A more intimate knowledge of our institutions for higher education; and will also urge upon these institutions the adoption of uniform entrance requirements.

4th. A continuance of the Library Extension in the mountains, and cooperation with the Kentucky Library Association.

A further action was the order to print in pamphlet form the papers on "Public Schools of Kentucky" and "Higher Education in Kentucky" for distribution among clubs and friends interested in this vital question.

## Plan of Work for 1907.



Your committee asks your serious consideration of the following outline:

First, that each club will form a strong Education Committee, willing to study thoroughly the situation in Kentucky and ready to co-operate in carefully planned work later in the year.

Second, that you will give a place on your program to a study of the public-school system of Kentucky and the district trustee system, as given in the last report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Study Kentucky's place in education, as reported in the last Census; study the need for graded schools in the rural districts; impress your legislators with the importance of separating the public schools from politics before the next Legislature; interest your local papers to write an editorial on "Public Schools in Kentucky" the first week in February, 1907; ask your ministers to preach on the question the Sunday following; get your lawyers to explain the laws governing our public schools, also the violation of same; visit at least two rural schools in your county and note the conditions carefully.

With an accurate knowledge of the situation—the causes and the remedy—the clubs of Kentucky will be ready for active co-operation with the Kentucky Educational Association, whose purposes are, first, to arouse interest in education and to insist upon the importance of every child being in school every day of the school term; second, to unite all the people of each community for the improvement of our public schools.

Most earnestly presented,

SARAH S. BARNES, Chairman.



# Public Schools of Kentucky.

By Mrs. Herbert W. Mengel  
of Louisville.



About three years ago, you will recall, there came to this country, upon the invitation of Mr. Mosely, a wealthy English philanthropist, some twenty-seven English educators and statesmen for the purpose of studying the education systems of our several States. Interest in our public-school system, it seems, had been most keenly aroused in England, because of the notable achievements of American engineers in the development of South Africa. It was men, trained in the technical schools of America, who first put mining in South Africa on a remunerative basis. It was men from American schools who built those wonderful bridges, so quickly and so surely that the world stood amazed. It was men from the same schools who, in the early stages of the Boer war, repaired the bridges of Natal as fast as they were destroyed; and those who looked on became impressed with the idea that such continued success could only be accounted for by the character of the education received in the United States.

The report of the Mosely Commission, upon its return to England, is full of interesting criticism, one striking paragraph of which I wish to quote to you. Mr. Mosely says:

"Looking into the future of our country, I feel bound to record my belief that the regime of the past, however successful it may have been, is obsolete. Honesty, doggedness, pluck, and many other good qualities possessed by Britons, though valuable in themselves, are useless to-day, unless accompanied by practical, up-to-date, scientific knowledge, and such knowledge is possible only by a broad and enlightened system of education, such as the United States possesses. I feel that if we are to hold our position as the dominant nation—or one of the dominant nations—of the world, we can not afford to lag behind in educational matters, as we are now doing."

Ladies and gentlemen, what Mr. Mosely has said of England we may fittingly apply to Kentucky. The pluck, the chivalry, the hospitality, and all the wonderful traits that have been so much heralded, though admirable in themselves, are useless to-day, unless accompanied by practical, up-to-date, scientific knowledge. If Kentucky is to be an essential and a creditable part of these United States, she can not afford to lag behind in educational matters, as she is now doing.

Now, if Kentuckians have a fault, I fear it is supreme self-satisfaction—a fault that is unfortunately most paralyzing to progress. When members of this committee have discussed with friends the educational status of Kentucky, we have been remonstrated with most feelingly. You do not like to hear such things. It seems such rank disloyalty—almost sacrilege—to put Kentucky so far down the line. Occasionally, when we have asked for Kentucky's place in education, we have met this answer: "Why, she is first, of course; how could she be anything else?" And then, too, you have

been inclined to attribute Kentucky's illiteracy to the colored population, but if you eliminate the colored population, Kentucky is no longer thirty-seventh, but forty-second, in the descending scale of education. And this difference is because we have calmly sat and let Virginia, Florida, Mississippi, Georgia and Arkansas slip in ahead of us on the list.

Now, one of the reasons why some of these States, battling against conditions worse than our own, have been pushing ahead of us in this matter of education, is because some very much needed and very admirable legislation has been effected in behalf of the public schools; but another reason, and by no means the least important, is because the women of those States have become so keenly alive to the necessities of the situation.

A few years ago, at a meeting held in the office of Governor Terrell, of Georgia, there was issued an address to the people of the State, and among other things, was said:

"Realizing the strong devotion of the women of the State to the welfare of the children, we appeal to them to organize school improvement clubs in every county and locality."

In July, 1904, an Educational Conference was held at Athens, at which the following resolution was adopted: "We appeal to the women of Georgia to organize School Improvement Clubs in every county and locality, in order that they may bring to bear, in behalf of educational matters and school buildings, those fine qualities and powers of womanhood that have made them so indispensable to the churches of the land."

In response to this appeal there was among the women of Georgia a great outburst of enthusiasm that has carried them forward in an exhilarating rush of common effort. School Improvement Clubs were organized in every county and locality; but the work was by no means confined to these clubs, especially organized for that purpose. It was taken up by clubs and societies of various sorts. History Clubs, Current Events Clubs, Literature Clubs, the D. A. R.'s, the Daughters of the Confederacy, the Council of Jewish Women, and even some Sunday-School classes, all joined in this work for school betterment. Generally a club would adopt some poor little half-starved country school for which it should work, and, for the most part, they confined their efforts, first, to the clearing of school grounds, the laying out and planting of school gardens, and the distribution of seeds; second, to the collecting of pictures and the collecting of books and magazines, so that each school might have the nucleus of a permanent school library.

In Virginia and North Carolina, too, the air is tingling with reform, and the stories of what has been done by their School Improvement Clubs read like the changes of the magician's hand. Here, too, especial attention is being paid to the rural schools, and so enthusiastically is the work being pushed that the editor of the Review of Reviews very optimistically predicts that the time will soon come when rural education in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, and some parts of the West, will have to come to North Carolina and Georgia to learn the best way of making the district school promote the best interests of country neighborhoods. It is said the

country schools of Georgia have so improved that city parents prefer to have their children educated in them than in the city.

Now the reverse is true in Kentucky, and every year thousands of our best citizens are selling or renting their farms and moving to town in order to give their children the educational advantages which the country should afford. This menace to the agricultural interests of our Commonwealth can only be corrected by giving better schools to the farmer's child. And you know Kentucky is an agricultural State and needs the educated farmer.

I suppose you are aware that we are in the midst of the greatest educational movement this country has even seen, not even being equalled by that crusade which Horace Mann started in Massachusetts some fifty years ago, and the strategic point of this whole movement seems to be the rural schools. Especially is this so in the South, where between eight-ninths and nine-tenths of the people are living in the rural districts, absolutely dependent upon the rural schools for education. To make these schools better in equipment and to make them take on the peculiar qualities that will best fit the children for their environment has become the end and aim of education.

Of course there never was a time when the American people did not believe in education, but education has come to mean something more and something different from what it once did. The accumulation of unassimilated facts do not fit for life, and the school that aims at the well-filled instead of the well-formed brain does so at the expense of growth, and misses a rare opportunity. Gradually we are grasping this idea, that the accumulation of facts must be made subsidiary to a pupil's inward ordering, and this theory has so taken hold of the educational world, and is in turn so supported by public opinion, that the present revolution is in progress. Everywhere are schools adjusting themselves to their larger future and adapting themselves to local conditions. To secure, first, a moral personality, and, second, to secure effective power in action, has become the end and aim of education, and this problem, difficult as it is, is being worked out with gratifying results, and nowhere are results more gratifying than in certain rural districts.

By way of illustration, let us note for a minute the rural schools of Canada. You know the Canadian government is gradually consolidating her rural schools, seeking to make them the best of their kind in the world. Over them she is placing especially trained instructors. In them she is making nature study central. A garden surrounds every school-house as its appropriate setting. On additional plots are planted wheat, potatoes, clover, and corn, and everything that pertains to the garden and everything that pertains to the farm is closely observed and studied. The winter lessons include the chemical side of agriculture. The year around, there is manual training and household science, putting both boys and girls in possession of themselves, their hands and their eyes, and giving their reason and judgment a chance to develop, as well as their memory for rules and definitions. Let it not be supposed

that the farm fence is to be the horizon or that books are discarded. Reading, writing and arithmetic are by no means neglected, and think how interesting the geography and the history and the botany become, proceeding as they do from the observation of things at home. So far from culture being ignored, such a scheme as this gives culture a broader basis by developing the rich meaning of homely tasks and homely scenes. Canada, within the last six years, has made strides in agriculture and industry so amazing as to awaken her people to new hope. She sees that her new gains are largely due to better education, and she is keenly alive to the augmented power still better education stands ready to bestow. She is also keenly alive to the fact that "you can not use yesterday's machinery in to-day's work."

Now, if better education can do so much for Canada, and make her progress one of the phenomenal things of the past decade, then better education can do the same for Kentucky, and certainly there is no greater field for work than right here in our own State. Moreover, if we went from the Atlantic to the Pacific, we would find no better material with which to work.

Last year this Education Committee of the State Federation sent out a list of questions to every woman's club in the State, requesting that answers be returned after a personal investigation of their schools. Gradually those answers came in, showing various degrees of carefulness in the consideration of the subjects. One thing, however, all of those clubs seemed to have in common, viz.: a too great satisfaction in the conditions as they exist.

To be sure, the women's clubs are in the most progressive towns and cities that we have, and so the schools visited were undoubtedly the most progressive and up-to-date schools that we have, and yet they are by no means what they should be.

In the first place, not one of those clubs reported that manual training had any part in the school curriculum; and yet all over the country the necessity of training the hand as a means of training the head is a well recognized fact. (Manual training in the high schools of Louisville is the exception in this case.)

Not one of those clubs reported that physical culture holds any place in school life, and yet we know that a sound body is necessary for a sound mind. Now, how can you be satisfied when two such important factors in modern education are ignored by your schools?

Not one of those clubs reported that there is an examination by their Board of Health of their school building, premises, teachers or pupils. And yet there is many and many a school building in a sanitary condition that would not be tolerated in the home. You can even find school-rooms where the same bucket of water and the same tin-cup (relics of barbarism) are still giving all of the children a drink and, incidentally, giving them several other things beside. And you can find many a school-room where atmosphere is the only cause for the number of clogged brains.

A club member who spent much time last winter visiting our various schools, remarked that she had been taking school air in broken doses, with a headache in every dose, and that if there is any one thing that public school teachers need to be taught it is the gospel of fresh air.

Right at the present time there is a great deal of excitement over the prevention and cure of tuberculosis, and yet we have teachers in our schools in more or less advanced stages of the disease, and it needs only a medical examination to find many children similarly affected, and hundreds of others with sore eyes and sore throats and sundry other things, which they are passing gratuitously along the line. Now, how can you be satisfied when not even the health of your children is properly safeguarded by the necessary sanitary precautions?

And how can you be satisfied when your school buildings and your school grounds are teaching, by the silent influence of environment, neither lessons of culture nor beauty?

And how can you be satisfied when the men on your school boards are put there not because they are men of intelligence, or culture, or high aims for human progress, but because they have the necessary political pull or, maybe, the necessary political pliancy?

A member of this committee once asked a member of a school board what possible interest a saloonkeeper, also a member of the board, could have in education, and the man replied: "Well, that's what I've been wondering. He has nothing to sell, and, so far as I can see, he gets no good out of the position." Think of it! The idea seemed to be, not what good the man brought the position, but what good the position brought the man. Now you would not have to exert yourself very much to find others, members of your board, who took just such a personal view of their position. Later, however, it was discovered that this saloonkeeper did have an interest in education, for he bought a school site for the board, for which his self appropriated commission was something like \$2,000. Now, how can you be satisfied when you are not even getting what you pay for?

But, perhaps, you are not satisfied—you are just indifferent. You say your children are in private schools, or you have no children, and so this question of public education does not interest you; but if you love your State; if you have any pride in it; if you have any ambition for it, then you can not let that, nor anything else, be an excuse for shirking your responsibility in this matter of education, which is getting to be more and more the rock upon which both society and government are founded.

In spite, however, of these shortcomings, and some others for which we have no time, we do say that our town and city schools are comparatively good, that they are improving, and there is no cause for the feeling of discouragement that arises, when we come to consider the schools of our rural districts.

Now, four-fifths of the people of Kentucky are living in the rural districts, dependent upon the rural schools for education, and yet these schools are

among the most inefficient and poorly equipped public schools in the United States.

In the recent report of James H. Fuqua, Superintendent of Public Instruction, I find embodied the following statements, made three years ago by Prof. Cassidy, of Lexington, but as true to-day as they were then:

"There are in Kentucky 1,238 old log school-houses, to say nothing of thousands of little plank boxes, nearly as unsightly and hardly as comfortable. There are in Kentucky 2,107 schools without suitable seats and blackboards. Only think of nearly 100,000 of Kentucky's children, humped over on backless slab benches, shivering with the cold, in the full light of this twentieth century, while searching for the long-lost common divisor on a broken slate! There are 4,584 schools without globes, maps, charts and other educational aids. This is more than half the schools in the State."

For one of these schools to have a school library is a thing undreamed of. The consolidation of several little schools into one good graded school is a thing unattempted, and yet consolidation is gradually getting to be an old story, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Wisconsin to the Gulf.

Now, there is no better way of judging a people's attitude toward this question of education, and the value it places on the training of the children, than to look at the school-houses, and certainly the school-houses of Kentucky tell a pitiful and a shameful story. Why, the barns in which the farmers shelter their stock are better and more comfortable than the houses in which their children are trained for citizenship. The work that has to do with mind and soul and body, with the shaping of character and the making of ideals, is carried on in buildings that are tumble-down and dilapidated. It is said that there is not a county in the State that has not a costlier and more comfortable jail than any rural school-house found within it. The ugly, desolate school-house, and the substantial, comfortable, awe-inspiring jail, I suppose, follow each other in natural sequence as cause and effect.

And what sort of teachers do you find in these school-houses? Well, much the sort that you would naturally expect to find in a ramshackle building. You can not get an improved teacher for meagre pay, and to say the pay of our country school teachers is meagre is putting it mildly. And you can not get an improved teacher, at any price, to go into an uncomfortable, unsightly and unhealthy school building.

Now, the law of Kentucky says that schools shall be provided with suitable seats and blackboards, and provided with such educational aids as maps, charts, etc., and yet this law is utterly disregarded by more than half the trustees in the Commonwealth. That alone is sufficient proof of the utter inefficiency of the trustee system. For many years Kentucky has been encumbered with 25,000 school trustees. It is a matter of record that 5,000 of these can neither read nor write, and 10,000 more have absolutely no conception of their duties or their responsibilities. It is such men who have the disposition of two and a half million dollars of school money annually.

One of the most important bills up before the Legislature in recent years was that providing for the abolition of the district trustee system and the substitution for it of a system that will make the county the school unit as it is the political unit. Just why this bill, that is of such vital importance, was defeated last year is best known to the powers that be. For twenty-five years this army of school trustees has been tolerated, and with disastrous results. You may write this down as the principal reason for the present illiteracy of our State, and we can see no hope ahead until we have gotten rid of this incubus and put in its place small, capable and responsible county boards. If this is done quickly, perhaps the next census, in 1910, will give us a better record than did the last. If this is not done quickly, the inevitable will happen—we will not even be thirty-seventh in the descending scale of education.

The next most important thing to be done, if the illiteracy of our State is to be decreased, is the enforcement of a compulsory education law. Statistics show that 22 per cent. of the white children of Kentucky between the ages of ten and fourteen, are not in school, and nearly 50 per cent. of the children of school age are not in school. We are sorry to have to claim quite a portion of this delinquency for Louisville, but the condition is prevalent all over the State. Recently two schools have come to our especial notice—one, in a district having sixty-seven children of school age, has an average attendance of only twelve; another, in a district having fifty-six children of school age, has not a child in attendance. That school receives its appropriation based on fifty-six children. The teacher sits up in solitary grandeur without a child. Now it needs no great powers of insight to know that there is something wrong there, not only with the school, but with the parents.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, what do all these facts and figures mean? They mean, first of all, that we must get to work, not in any spirit of excited strenuousness, for that always arouses mistrust and antagonism, but calmly, energetically and unitedly for better things. If we do not, the chances are that we will be left so far behind that we will become a drag on the nation.

The question has been asked, Why has not the Southern Education Association and the General Education Board, with its \$10,000,000 Rockefeller fund at its disposal, helped us when we need help so much? Well, simply for one reason, and one reason only—we have shown no disposition to help ourselves.

Unfortunately, we have inherited here in Kentucky a feeling that it makes not much difference how the masses are trained, so long as the few are cultured, and so we have remained indifferent to the education of the many and boasted of the culture of the few; and yet, just as the training of the individual is necessary to his success in life, so is the training of the many necessary for the life of the community. No State can rise above the level of her average man, and every untrained man lowers her moral and economic efficiency.

What Kentucky needs is a great educational revival among her people. There is no cottage in the State too humble to help along this agitation for better schools, more schools, better teachers, better methods, better school boards; and there is not a man or woman here who can not bring to bear, in behalf of these educational matters, those fine qualities of mind and heart that have helped to make Kentucky famous.

## Higher Education in Kentucky.

By Dr. Irene C. Meyers,  
Dean of Kentucky University.



### OUR EDUCATIONAL PYRAMID.

We are all familiar with the figure of the pyramid, under which our system of education is so frequently symbolized. Its base is our public and private schools, graded and ungraded. Public and private secondary schools or High Schools, Normal and Technical Schools and Colleges raise the structure step by step, and at the top stands the University. Primary, secondary and higher institutions mark so many progressive steps in the same system. They are mutually dependent; they are so inter-related that the weakness of one portion implies the weakness or inefficiency of the whole.

This, in brief, is our national ideal of education; it is in accordance with this ideal that those States which have made the greatest progress have worked out their system of schools.

My province is to bring before you what Kentucky has done in fashioning one portion of this pyramidal structure—that which we name the higher education. It must, however, be apparent to any one that the higher education depends upon the secondary and the primary. The height of the pyramid depends upon the number and extent of the steps which lie between it and the base; its stability, its permanence, its character, indeed, depend upon the quality of the building below it. I can not, therefore, talk of higher education in Kentucky without making direct connection with the form of education which precedes it.

### DEFINITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

One other introductory word I must speak, and that is in definition of what I mean by higher education. I have used it in its broadest sense, and applied it to that education which follows upon a high-school training. It



may be a college education. It may be of a professional or a technical character. In the case of a woman there is still a third possibility—she may enter the so-called “finishing” school. But this is only a possibility; there are so few of these schools, which, even by the most generous estimate of their work, can be considered within the pale of higher education, that I shall leave them out of this discussion. Usually they will take students who are not prepared to enter a high school, and frequently their training does not equal that of the high school in its disciplinary value. It seems more nearly accurate, however, to class them with secondary schools than with institutions of higher learning.

### THE BASE OF OUR PYRAMID.

It requires only a brief survey of the conditions in Kentucky to convince an unprejudiced student that if we have an educational pyramid at all it is unsymmetrically constructed. There is no nice fitting of part to part; there are places where the structure is ragged and incomplete, and the apex—the University—has yet to be adjusted. It, indeed, never can be safely and permanently adjusted until the defects in the sub-structure are remedied. Let us consider from two points of view the schools which make up this sub-structure:

First—We learn from the report of the Commissioner of Education for the year 1903 (the last one issued) that the average number of days attended by each pupil enrolled in the public schools of Kentucky was 55.6. In Florida it was 70.9; in Georgia, 73; in West Virginia, 79.4; in Ohio, 112.2; in Illinois, 124.6; in California, 129.7; in Massachusetts, 148.9. In short, among all the States and Territories which make up our Nation there was but one with a worse record in this respect than Kentucky—the average in Oklahoma being 55.5.

This humiliating condition can not be explained upon the hypothesis that Kentucky enrolls a larger percentage of pupils in private schools than are enrolled by the other States. According to the same report, only Florida and West Virginia, among the States mentioned, fall lower than Kentucky in the percentage of pupils in private schools.

Interpreted into another form, these statistics mean that the average pupil in Kentucky must attend school more than six and one-half years before he receives one full year of instruction. If he has started to school when six years of age, he will then be in his thirteenth year. In so many instances—indeed, in the majority—this is the sum total of the education which Kentucky gives. I submit to you, ladies, that one year—365 days—is a very meagre portion of life to be spent in the school-room. It may be argued that, while this statement is true with reference to the public schools, it is not equally true of the private schools. I grant it, but I call your attention to the small proportion of pupils enrolled in the private schools. The masses of our people send their children to the free schools, and the intelligence of our future citizenship will be determined by the

character of the education which the State provides. There is not one of us who can afford to say, "I have no personal interest in this matter. I shall see to it that my own children have the best advantages in private schools, and that is as far as my duty goes." Is it? Your children are part of a society which is all the time becoming more democratic. We would not have it otherwise, but a democracy can not rise higher than the attainment of its average citizen. Your children are in a minority—a small minority—and it is the average attainment which gives Kentucky her standing as a State. More than this, it is the average citizen who sets the standard of effort, who develops the ideal of the Commonwealth—intellectual, social, economic, moral—and, although your child may rise above it, he will be continually weighed down by the conditions about him. The only successful future for the individual in a democracy lies in the steady pull of the whole people towards higher things. Some statistics recently compiled by Superintendent Mark, of Louisville, illustrate my meaning from the economic side. I commend them to you. He found that for every \$1.00 expended for educational purposes in Kentucky, Indiana expended \$1.49, Ohio \$1.87. On the other hand, for every \$1.00 earned by the inhabitant of Kentucky, the inhabitant of Indiana earned \$1.57; he of Ohio, \$1.75.

Secondly—In the thirty-two years between 1870 and 1902 the increase in school expenditure per capita of total population in Kentucky has been .39; in Georgia, .72; in Florida, .74; in West Virginia, 1.09; in Ohio, 1.13; in Massachusetts, 1.37; in Illinois, 1.39; in California, 2.29. Kentucky has not shown a tendency to increase her expenditure for schools in a way at all comparable to that of the other States which have been cited.

#### EFFECT ON HIGHER EDUCATION.

Do you ask why I refer to these facts, when my subject is "Higher Education in Kentucky"? It is because they have such a direct bearing upon higher education. If the base of the pyramid is fragile, it can not uphold a heavy superstructure; if parts of it are missing, the top may tumble. You can not safely build high unless you have laid firmly your foundation. Some of the institutions for higher education in Kentucky have recognized this, and have felt compelled to give a portion of their time to strengthening the foundation. Others have built light and unsubstantial structures upon it, but with these it is not worth while to linger, because they are necessarily ephemeral. This much is clear: the colleges of Kentucky which have met the conditions have had not only to supplement the work of the primary school, but to bridge over the chasm between the primary school and the college, for in secondary schools Kentucky is very weak.

#### DEARTH OF HIGH SCHOOLS IN KENTUCKY.

There is no question as to the accuracy of this statement, but it is a difficult one to discuss, because it seems impossible to obtain any definite data concerning our secondary schools. So far as I have been able to ascer-

tain, no report has been made of the number and character of public high schools in the State. They are not dealt with in the last biennial report of the State Superintendent. I have not been able—and I have tried—to obtain any information on this subject from the department of education at Frankfort. By individual school-men whom I have consulted, who understand the condition of public education in the State, I have had reported twelve high schools, and not all of these are of first rank. Furthermore, the few high schools we have can not all of them be said to be parts of a system of education; they are not so regarded by the public, and they do not so regard themselves; and yet no State has ever succeeded in building up even its primary schools until it has brought them into relation with high schools; or its high schools until it has brought them into relation with its colleges. So far as our colleges are concerned, indeed, they must interest themselves in all efforts to improve secondary schools. It does not matter whether the college is State or denominational, its growth is dependent upon the development of the State's secondary schools as truly as the bluegrass is dependent upon the soil. There is a mistaken impression that Kentucky is full of young men and young women prepared to enter college, and that all that is necessary is for us to send out some agent to persuade them to come in. The truth is that we have to get them ready after they come; that many become discouraged and drop out because they lack preparation, and that many remain only through the preparatory period. This is not the material out of which a college is builded.

If some uniform regulation were enforced, by which seven years of primary school training brought the pupil to the first year of the high school, and four years of high-school training met the uniform entrance requirement of the colleges, then the colleges of Kentucky might be doing the work which is rightfully theirs; but this is not the condition.

#### LOW STANDARD OF PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS.

Nor is the work of the private secondary schools, except in a few instances, articulated with that of the higher institutions. They also have existed as independent schools, as part of no system of education, looking neither forward to higher nor backward to lower institutions. They have consequently felt no compulsion to hold their work up to a definite standard, and have not exercised any influence towards raising the standard of the primary schools. Too frequently these secondary schools have ranked themselves as colleges, when their work has not been equal to that of a first-call high school. Such schools as these have been, and are, sending out graduates who think that they have been in institutions of higher education, and who consequently innocently perpetuate a low standard for such education.

I wish to repeat that Kentucky is peculiarly weak in secondary schools. Take the matter of private schools for girls, at least one of which is to be found in almost every town in the State. I have been able to learn of but

three whose certificates will admit young women to the freshmen year of colleges of first rank. This fact, taken in connection with the other fact that there is no accessible high school where she can be prepared, makes it something of a problem as to what the young girl shall do who would enter college. Parents who look upon a four-years' absence with some degree of equanimity, will not agree to the eight years which are necessary if she must obtain her preparation, as well as her college training, away from home. Further, parents who are financially able to support their daughters through a four-years' course, do not feel able to continue it through an additional four years. In consequence, what they look upon as a compromise is made, and the girl is sent to some institution so elastic in its entrance requirements that all are welcome, and so flexible in its graduation requirements that four years at most—usually two years—are all that are needed in which to turn out a finished product.

I do not wish to be understood as thinking that there is no place for this sort of unclassified and unclassifiable school, which is both primary and secondary, and has numerous attachments which are sometimes thought to give it the flavor of a higher institution; but I do wish to be understood as advocating the utmost frankness of statement on the part of these institutions, the utmost accuracy in grading their work, lest they assist in blurring our standards and confusing our ideas. There will always be large numbers of people, I suppose, who wish for their daughters just the sort of education offered in these schools, and large numbers of daughters who are peculiarly adapted to it, so that the patronage of these schools will not vanish if they make a definite and unvarnished statement of the work they do. I do plead for increased opportunities for the young people who wish to receive adequate college preparation, and who, in so many instances, instead of bread, are receiving stones. At the same time, I look forward eagerly to the day when the colleges of Kentucky will cut off their preparatory departments and will concentrate their energies upon the collegiate work. It is not their province to supply the place of secondary schools, and they have been endeavoring to do it. On the other hand, they have been neglecting their real duty of uplifting the standards of such schools.

#### EFFECT UPON PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

The inadequacy of our facilities for secondary education has especial bearing upon the professional and technical schools of the State. It is generally conceded that the student who would become a civil engineer, or a doctor, or a lawyer, or a minister, or a teacher, should have laid his foundation in at least a high-school education. Of course, we all know that in the world at large more and more emphasis is being placed upon the thoroughness with which this foundation is laid. Indeed, the day is not far distant when the man who has taken his special training without having previously developed his powers by a liberal education will have no chance

to succeed. We do not now listen without protest to a minister who in bad English hands out to us the dry husks of outgrown creeds, or who has no perspective in his view of existing conditions, and can give no intelligent help towards the solving of present-day problems. The demands of his position are forcing him more and more towards a liberal, not necessarily a theological, education.

We are loth to place our lives in the hands of a physician who mechanically doles out his doses according to the directions he has memorized. We are demanding that he shall have had years of the sort of training which will awaken and strengthen his powers, which will give him control over himself and, in that way, understanding and control over others; we are demanding of him in his diagnoses the skill of the psychologist, because we are recognizing that he must minister so frequently to the "mind diseased."

In a greater or less degree the necessity of a liberal education is being pressed upon every individual who would establish himself in the other professions. And how are the young men and women of Kentucky to meet this pressure? A large proportion do not have access even to a good graded school; a far larger proportion do not have access to any institutions of high-school grade.

Moreover, the majority of these students are unwilling or unable to go away from home for several years' work in a preparatory school or college before they enter upon their professional training. If the opportunity to enter a public high school were open to them at home, the professional schools would undoubtedly receive students better fitted to take up their work. Still, I believe that the insistence upon adequate preparation must come from above. The students who wish to enter do not know how much they lack; they do not know that without a liberal education they are starting in life's race with a heavy handicap. Their dominant idea is "I must save money and gain time," and it seems to their inexperienced eyes that this is being done if they can jump from the primary school into the professional. It is here that the professional school must itself come to their rescue and, by establishing a proper entrance requirement, give them a fair chance to start right.

There are in Kentucky a goodly number of professional schools. In Louisville alone there are over two thousand students in schools of this character, and some of them are making an effort to establish a standard for admission. At no time is this effort unattended by difficulties, and they are multiplied where, as in Kentucky, endowments are small or altogether wanting. The schools think that they must live, and since they depend for support upon the number of their students, they are not likely to be over-critical as to the qualifications of these students. If one school raises its standard and another does not, the chances are that the students will flock to the one where entrance is easy. At any rate, many of the schools are afraid to run the risk, and so they continue in a vicious circle—the untrained students dragging down the standard of the schools, and the low

entrance requirements in the schools encouraging a continuation of the same lack of preparation on the part of the students.

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At least one result of these conditions is apparent: our young men and women, inadequately educated here, as they are, for their various occupations, can not measure up to the standard which is being set for the future leaders of our nation. And it seems a pity—does it not?—that Kentucky should no longer rank among the first of the States in contributing to our national life. But it is true even now that she does not, and it will be more bitterly true as the years go by, if she does not turn her attention more closely to the education of her people.

#### DEAN SHALER'S PROPHECY.

Eleven years ago, Dean Shaler, of Harvard University, himself a Kentuckian, wrote of Kentucky: "The educational problem is by far the most serious of all the difficulties before this State. The neglect of education has gone so far that it jeopardizes the future influence of the people in the affairs of the nation. Hitherto the natural talents of the people, given then by the admirable accidents of selection that secured to the Commonwealth the most vigorous blood of America, have served them well, have enabled them to keep a permanent place in all the arts of war and peace. As long as the native strength of this people, unhelped by training, was matched against equally untrained people from the other Western States, there was no State in the Mississippi Valley that had anything like the power of giving able men for all needs that was manifested in Kentucky. This is seen in the history of legislation, trade, and war in the decades of this century down to the war of the Rebellion. In the war Kentucky produced more good soldiers than any other equal population of the West, and at the present moment she has a larger number of her sons in important public positions; but these men, with rare exception, have owed their promotion to the gifts of nature, unhelped by education. The time when men can win without the aid of training is rapidly passing away. It can hardly be hoped that the native talent of this people will enable them much longer to keep the lead in the race for dominion. In another generation they will certainly be left behind by their less well-endowed but more aptly-trained competitors, unless they meet the needs of education with the same courage and self-sacrifice with which they have faced the other dangers and difficulties of their development."

Who can deny that the words of this honored son of Kentucky are the words of a friend? And who can say that his prophecy is not already being fulfilled? Kentucky has superb material in its young men and women. They have strong physiques, and strong, fine minds, and clear, clean ideas of what is honorable; but, because this State has stood still while others have moved forward, because it has been self-satisfied while others have been eagerly learning, these young men and women are unprepared to compete with their fellows.

## THE DENOMINATIONAL INFLUENCE IN KENTUCKY.

When we examine the educational condition in Kentucky, in so far as it is represented by the colleges, we meet with a remarkable situation. She has reversed the process which the older States have for the most part gone through in making their educational history. She, in common with the other older States, raised the cap-stone of her educational pyramid (in the old Transylvania University) before she looked after her foundation. But she went further than the others in that she also outlined a system of secondary education. Both of these were to be provided for by the State. In contrast, the contemporaneous history of higher education in the other States shows that it was in the beginning under denominational control. Their later history shows them emerging from that control, either into State or into non-denominational institutions. Their secondary and primary schools developed also under the control of the State.

On the other hand, Kentucky moved in the opposite direction; she abandoned her plan of State provision for secondary education; further, the Transylvania was made at the same time a State institution and under denominational control—an arrangement by which the responsibility of the State was lessened and the opportunity was opened for denominational jealousy. One after another different denominations had their turn in its management, and one after another they withdrew to build up their own institutions and to make of them centers of competition with the university for public loyalty and public patronage. Still other denominations, emulating their example, erected their institutions. Dissatisfied elements in denominations already represented, started other institutions, until, in 1847, Collins tells us in his "Sketches" that Kentucky had more colleges than any other State in the Union. They had small endowment, or none at all, and they were lacking in equipment. They drew away support from the central institution, and at the same time they were so numerous that they could not be adequately supported. Kentucky is strewn with the wrecks of these institutions, but she still had, according to "Lewis' Monograph on Higher Education in Kentucky" (issued by the U. S. Bureau of Education in 1899), fifteen institutions of higher education. In the Commissioner of Education's report of 1903 she has eleven. These figures do not include professional schools or the so-called colleges for girls. If these statistics are to be relied upon, we are gradually tending towards consolidation, or at least towards a concentration of our support upon a smaller number of institutions. In my opinion this is a step forward, but we move very slowly.

Our present condition is this: Nominally, in so far as Kentucky has a system of education, it leads through primary and secondary schools to State College. Practically, it leads in many other directions as well—for Baptist youths to a Baptist college, for Presbyterian youths to a Presbyterian college, for Christian youths to a Christian college, for Methodist youths to a Methodist college. So far as I know, the Episcopalians have been impartially distributed. Of course this statement as to patronage is

not exact when we regard each individual student, but it is correct as to the general tendency. There is also a sectional line of cleavage, and for the most part, the mountain youths will be found in a mountain college.

#### TOO MANY POORLY-EQUIPPED INSTITUTIONS.

It is frequently said by those of kindly heart, who cultivate good will towards all, that there is room for every one of these institutions. You will pardon me for saying that this seems to me to be a superficial judgment. There is room for just as many as the people of Kentucky will equip and support. When we add together the number of students in academic work in all of these colleges we have a smaller number than are to be found in great State or undenominational institutions elsewhere. And if we should subtract from our sum total the number of our students who are really doing preparatory work in the colleges, we should see that we are enacting an educational tragedy which has also some of the characteristics of a farce. We are not killing outright the spirit of progress, but we are sapping its vitality. We are placing our young men and women in institutions whose equipment can not, because of the very nature of the conditions, equal that of institutions in other States. I agree with the people who contend that for many reasons the small college is a desirable place in which to be educated, but it should have laboratories, and libraries, and museums at its command. The day has gone by when the teacher at one end of a log and the pupil at the other constitute a college. We must be doing things in college; we must be exercising our own powers, not simply receiving instruction and coming in contact with fine personalities. To these things the others have been added.

I am familiar with the condition in one section of Kentucky, where, within a radius of fifty miles, six of her institutions of higher education are largely duplicating one another's work. And when I realize that in my own department its efficiency might be multiplied by six if these institutions were consolidated, and that the same statement might be made with reference to at least a number of the other departments, I feel that we are responsible for a criminal dissipation of our energies.

#### CONSOLIDATION OR CO-OPERATION.

I am not so visionary as to suppose that such a consolidation can be brought about by the mere speaking of a word, but I do believe that those who have the interests of Kentucky at heart should face and understand the situation, and be ready to encourage, and to initiate if need be, an effort to improve it.

Let me illustrate what the present condition means, in addition to this poverty of resource to which I have referred. In my own college, in a department where the work is thought to be heavy, I know of two instances of students holding over the professor the direful threat that unless he re-



laxed his requirements they would transfer their allegiance to an institution where less was demanded of them. It is true that this had no influence, and that the students remained where they were, but it is not impossible that such a threat should exercise an influence over an institution which must point to its numbers in justification of its existence. Further, if this rivalry does not modify the quality of the work which is done in the colleges, it has, I believe, exercised a strong influence in keeping down the standard for entrance; the number of students is swelled by the admission of those who are unprepared, and it is difficult, since numbers mean so much, to turn any away, or even to insist upon adequate preparation after they have come. It does not take a college professor to see that such a situation is unfavorable to the best interests of higher education.

Not only so, but it is unfavorable to the best interests of secondary education. As I said before, it has seemed necessary for the colleges to maintain their own preparatory schools, but along with this necessity should have come the responsibility to make of them first-class schools, and the still further responsibility of refusing to accept inferior work from other preparatory schools. If the colleges do not meet this responsibility—and they have not done so—they are an actual hindrance to the growth of secondary schools in the State, when they should be the strongest influence towards raising their standards.

Again, while it has seemed necessary for the colleges to maintain their preparatory schools, this very circumstance has in a measure isolated them and made against the growth of an articulated system of education. If the experience of other States counts for anything, we may assume that it is only through an articulated system that a definite standard of scholarship can be obtained, and it is only through such a system that the steady raising of that standard is possible. I would conclude, then, that our first step must be towards co-operation and organization; co-operation of the higher institutions with one another—co-operation, not competition; co-operation of the higher institutions with the lower in the effort to develop a system of education. It is true that in this way we may reduce the number of our so-called colleges, for if the high school of the State were fostered, the preparatory departments in connection with our colleges would close for lack of students; and if the preparatory departments closed, some of our colleges might vanish. But would not this be well? Would it not be an advance upon our present condition? Those which were needed would survive, while the others would die, or so be modified that they would meet an existing need.

#### IN CONCLUSION.

And now, ladies, I have brought before you some conditions which I wish were otherwise than as they are; I have brought them before you because you are a body influential in creating public sentiment, and, however unpleasing they may be, I have no apology to make for enumerating them. I do not think that it is the part of wisdom to close our eyes to things as they

actually exist. We never can make the progress we should make until we are willing to acknowledge our shortcomings. We never can supplement our present inadequate efforts, unless we bravely face the fact that they are inadequate.

Furthermore, I do not believe that we are acting the part of good citizens; that we are showing a real loyalty to our Commonwealth, or a real love for our institutions, if we blindly assert that they are altogether good because they are ours, and refuse to subject them to unfavorable criticism. Preliminary to any step in educational progress here in Kentucky is our recognition that beyond our borders are better institutions than we have at home. When we have gone thus far, it will be strange if the love of Kentuckians for Kentucky, if their pride in their State and their loyalty to it will not be concentrated in a united, persistent, steady, intelligent demand that young men and young women shall have here at home opportunities at least equal to those offered elsewhere.



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